

Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

WILSON, LARRY DAVID. 1987. *Tantilla schistosa*.

Tantilla schistosa (Bocourt)

Homalocranium schistosum Bocourt, 1883:584. Type-locality, "la Haute Vera Paz" [=Alta Verapaz] and "Mexique" [=México]; restricted to Alta Verapaz, Guatemala by Smith (1942). Lectoholotype, Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle Paris 1883-506, sex, age status, and date of collection unknown, collected by M.-F. Bocourt (examined by author).

Tantilla schistosa: Cope, 1887:83.

Homalocranium schistosum: Günther, 1895:152.

Tantilla phrenetica Smith, 1942:39. Type-locality, "Cauatlapán, Veracruz, [México]." Holotype, Nat. Mus. Natur. Hist. (USNM) 110381, female, collected 7-14 August 1940 by Hobart M. Smith (examined by author).

Tantilla schistosa phrenetica: Smith, 1962:13.

Tantilla schistosa schistosa: Smith, 1962:13.

Tantilla schistosa taylori Smith, 1962:17. Type-locality, "Suretka, [Prov. Limón], Costa Rica." Holotype, Univ. Kansas Mus. Natur. Hist. 35627, adult female, collected 1 August 1954 by Edward H. Taylor (examined by author).

- CONTENT. No subspecies are recognized (Wilson, 1982).

• DEFINITION AND DIAGNOSIS. "A species of *Tantilla* with a pale to dark brown dorsum, with or without a paling of color on the middorsal scale row. The head pattern consists of a complete or medially divided pale nuchal band separating the head color from that of the dorsum. The pale nuchal band begins on the posterior portion of the parietals and extends one-half to two scales posterior to the parietals. A postocular pale spot may or may not be present. The venter is immaculate cream or reddish orange. Ventrals and subcaudals range from 117 to 147 and 24 to 42, respectively.

Tantilla schistosa may be distinguished from all congeners by having a pale to dark brown dorsum with or without a paling of color on the middorsal scale row, no pale lateral stripe, a pale venter, a head cap more-or-less the same color as the dorsum of the body, a pale nuchal band, 117 to 147 ventrals and 24 to 42 subcaudals.

• DESCRIPTIONS. Descriptions of range-wide material are in Smith (1962), who recognized four subspecies, and Wilson (1982), who recognized none. Other descriptions of more limited scope are in Boulenger (1896), Darling and Smith (1954), Günther (1895), Neill and Allen (1962), Smith (1942, 1943), Taylor (1951, 1954), Wilson and Meyer (1982), and Wilson and Villa (1973).

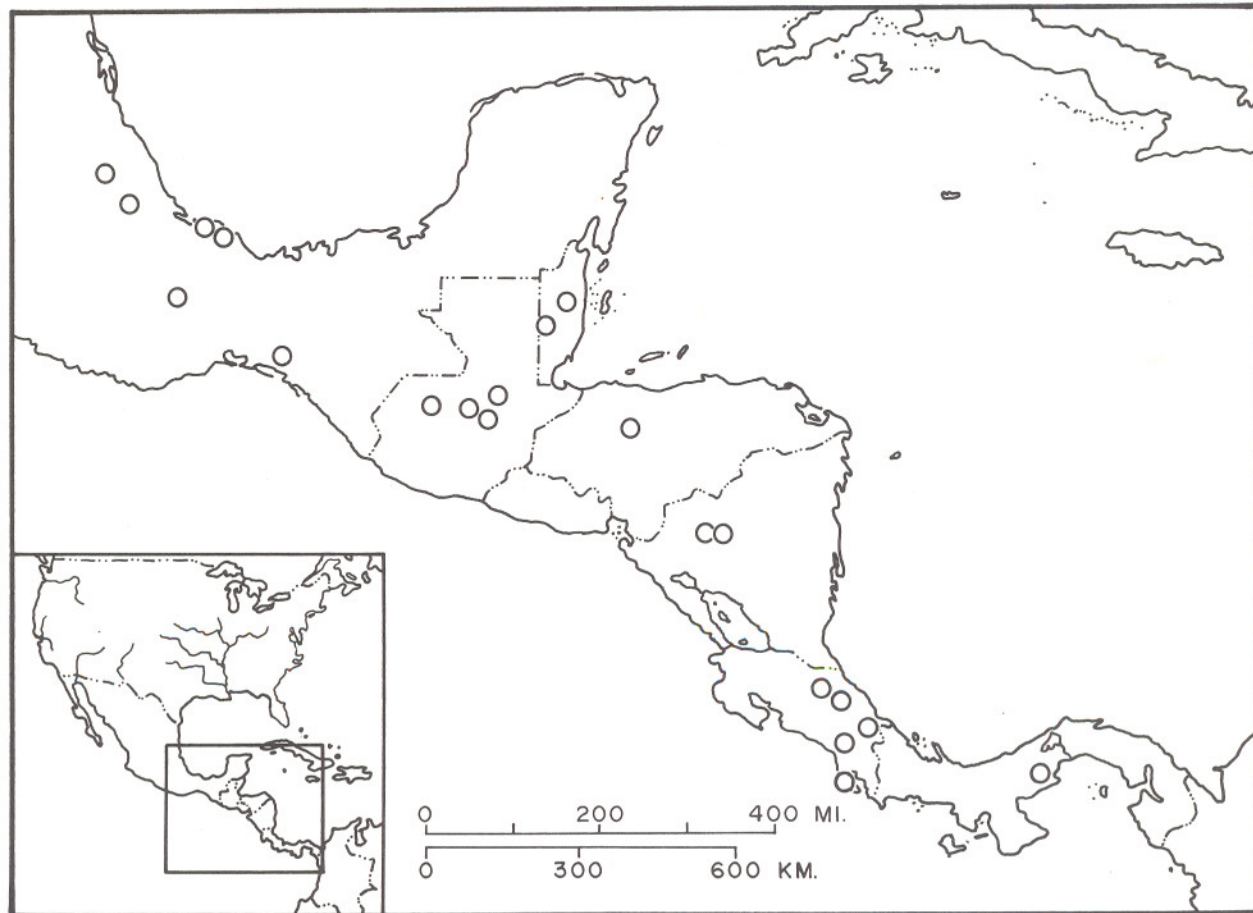
• ILLUSTRATIONS. Wilson (1982) presented black-and-white photographs of lateral and dorsal views of the head and anterior body. Darling and Smith (1954) included a black-and-white photograph of the entire body. Bocourt (1883) published pen-and-ink drawings of lateral, dorsal, and ventral views of the head and anterior body, as well as the rostral and nasal scales.

• DISTRIBUTION. *Tantilla schistosa* occurs at low, moderate, and intermediate elevations of the Caribbean versant from Veracruz and Oaxaca, México, to Panamá.

- FOSSIL RECORD. None.

• PERTINENT LITERATURE. The majority of the literature on this species deals with taxonomy. The most important papers on this aspect of this species' biology are cited elsewhere in this account. Information on habitat preference is included in Bogert and Duellman (1963), Scott (1969), and Taylor (1951). Data on microhabitat preference are in Stuart (1943, 1948, 1950). Shannon (1951) provided a note on activity, and Taylor (1951) one on predation. Stuart (1948) noted the time of collection of two newborn specimens, which was repeated by Fitch (1970).

• ETYMOLOGY. The name *schistosa* is derived from the Latin or Greek *schistos*, meaning "split," in presumed allusion to the separation of the dark head and body color by the pale nuchal band.



MAP 1. Known distribution of *Tantilla schistosa*; type-locality too indefinite to plot.

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LARRY DAVID WILSON, MIAMI-DADE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, MIAMI, FLORIDA 33176.

Primary editor for this account, Jaime D. Villa.

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